United Nations A/54/191

General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 July 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session

Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Letter dated 19 July 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly of a supplementary item of an urgent and important nature entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum concerning the request is attached as an annex to the present letter, attesting to the urgency and importance of this matter. It is proposed that this new item be considered in plenary, without reference to a Main Committee.

I further have the honour to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Hans Peter **Manz**
Chargé d'affaires
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Austria to the United Nations

99-21418 (E) 260799

Annex

Explanatory memorandum

I

1. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty of 24 September 1996 (hereinafter referred to as the Treaty) prohibits any nuclear-weapon test explosion and any other nuclear explosion. In its preamble, the States parties to the Treaty recognize that the cessation of all nuclear-weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. Thus, the Treaty will contribute to the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) was established in New York on 19 November 1996 at the first meeting of States Signatories to the Treaty. The seat of the Commission, which has held eight sessions thus far, is in Vienna.

3. The Commission was established for the purpose of carrying out the necessary preparations for the effective implementation of the Treaty, including ensuring the operationalization of the Treaty's verification regime at entry into force. The Commission established a provisional technical secretariat, which took up its work on 17 March 1997 at the seat of the Commission.

4. In accordance with paragraph 7 of the Text on the establishment of the Commission, the Commission has the authority to negotiate and enter into agreements. The Treaty itself provides for the conclusion of an agreement with the United Nations.

5. The Treaty also provides for the utilization of existing expertise and facilities and to maximize cost-efficiencies through cooperative arrangements with other international organizations.

II

6. In the light of the foregoing, the Commission adopted the decision on 21 April 1999 authorizing the Executive Secretary to enter into negotiations with the United Nations Secretary-General regarding a relationship agreement between the two organizations.

7. In order to regulate the general relationship between the United Nations and the Commission, it is highly desirable that the General Assembly invite the Secretary-General of the United Nations to enter into negotiations with the Commission, with a view to concluding such an agreement, to be applied provisionally pending approval by the General Assembly and the Commission.

8. The conclusion of this agreement is an issue of great urgency. In the process of carrying out the necessary preparations for the effective implementation of the Treaty, the 321 monitoring stations of the International Monitoring System, to be hosted by about 90 States, will either have to be newly built or upgraded to a common standard. The Commission is currently intensifying the process of establishing the Treaty's verification regime, which needs to be capable of meeting the verification requirements of the Treaty at its entry into force. In this process, the Commission is seeking to use existing expertise by cooperating with other international organizations, as provided for by the Treaty. Cooperation with the United Nations and with its programmes and specialized agencies is crucial for the successful preparation of the entry into force of the Treaty. Such cooperation with United Nations programmes and organs, as well as with United Nations specialized agencies, will be greatly facilitated by the conclusion of an agreement regulating the relationship between the United Nations and the Commission.